



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



Public Hearing – March 2, 2008
Planning and Development Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Gina McCarthy
Department of Environmental Protection

**Raised House Bill No. 6588 - AN ACT AN ACT CONCERNING TRAINING FOR LOCAL
LAND USE COMMISSIONERS**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Raised House Bill No. 6588 AN ACT AN ACT CONCERNING TRAINING FOR LOCAL LAND USE COMMISSIONERS. The Department of Environmental Protection certainly supports the training of local land use officials to assist them in making informed and well thought out decisions under existing state laws and regulations. Unfortunately, as drafted the bill identifies CLEAR as the "lead agency" for developing land use courses, and that implies an exclusivity that we do not believe is appropriate.

Under current law, section 22a-39 of the General Statutes, the Department is required to develop a comprehensive training program for inland wetlands agency members. As the agency that is also charged with exercising oversight of the administration and enforcement of the Inland Wetlands Act, we are uniquely qualified to provide such training.

We will continue to work, in cooperation with other private and governmental institutions, to provide the finest quality training opportunities we can to local Inland Wetland and Watercourse agencies and staff as well as to the other regulated constituencies that we serve through the environmental education and training opportunities we provide.

The Department also has concerns about section (c) of the draft language. It is not clear from this section what standards the reviewing court would use in considering the training and expertise of wetland and watercourse commissioners. This provision is likely not necessary, and we are willing to work with the Committee to address our concerns.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the DEP's views on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact Robert LaFrance, the DEP legislative liaison, at 424-3401.